

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SOE-02 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 EA-10 /136 W
-----095278 210332Z /75

R 191333Z APR 72
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5819
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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DEPARTMENT PASS AID

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: EMIN, ENGR, JO
SUBJECT: OIL EXPLORATION IN JORDAN

1. CONSORTIUM OF FILON (US), FUYO (JAPANESE), AND TOTAL
(FRENCH) HAS COLLABORATED IN DRILLING TEST WELL IN JORDAN
AT RAMTHA, NEAR SYRIAN BORDER, ON BASIS OF PRIOR EN-
COURAGING SEISMIC SURVEY PREVIOUSLY CONDUCTED BY FILON.
AFTER DRILLING MORE THAN 2500 METERS, GROUP HAS CONCLUDED
THAT THERE IS NO OIL IN ITS NORTHEASTERN JORDAN CONCESSION
AREA. DRILLING OPERATION WAS SHUT DOWN ON APRIL 18 AND
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RIG BEING DISASSEMBLED. TOTAL'S SENIOR LOCAL REPRE-
SENTATIVE HAS TOLD EMBASSY HE BELIEVES THAT OIL, WHICH
CERTAINLY HAD ONCE BEEN IN AREA, "WASHED OUT" WITH CREA-
TION OF JORDAN VALLEY RIFT.

2. SEISMIC STUDIES INITIATED BY FILON AT DEAD SEA'S

LISAN PENINSULA IN APRIL ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN EARLY MAY. FIRST SEISMIC DATA HAS BEEN SENT TO PARIS FOR COMPUTER PROCESSING. TENTATIVE FILON CONCLUSION IS THAT THIS DATA IS ADEQUATE FOR ACCURATE PROCESSING IF NOT "DAZZLING": ABILITY TO OBTAIN GOOD SEISMIC DATA IN AREA OF MASSIVE SALT DEPOSITS HAD BEEN QUESTIONABLE. ONLY PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED SO FAR IN THIS DIFFICULT TERRAIN HAS BEEN NECESSITY OF CLEARING OLD LAND MINES AS WORK PROCEEDS. TOTAL REPRESENTATIVE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT DEAD SEA PROSPECTS, HOWEVER. HE FEELS THAT IF SEISMIC WORK SHOWS PROMISE OF OIL, IT WILL BE AT DEPTH OF AT LEAST 4000 METERS, AND COMMERCIAL EXTRACTION WOULD NOT BE COMMERCIALY ATTRACTIVE UNTIL END OF CENTURY.

3. AT THIS TIME ONLY OTHER ACTIVE OIL EXPLORATION BEING UNDERTAKEN IS BY FRENCH CONTRACTOR IN JORDAN'S PANHANDLE. NO EVALUATION OF THIS WORK PRESENTLY AVAILABLE.

4. GOJ GAVE NO PUBLICITY TO RAMTHA EXPLORATION, IN VIEW OF FAILURE TO FIND OIL ("DRIEST HOLE" TOTAL REPRESENTATIVE HAS EVER SEEN), JUDGMENT WAS OBVIOUSLY SOUND. SIMILARLY SHUT DOWN OF RIG WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. PICKERING

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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